

(8)

A VIEW of the
Political Transactions
O F
G R E A T B R I T A I N ,
Since the
C O N V E N T I O N
Was approved of by
P A R L I A M E N T .
Designed as
*An Introduction to the HISTORY
of the present WAR.*

In a LETTER to an absenting MEMBER.

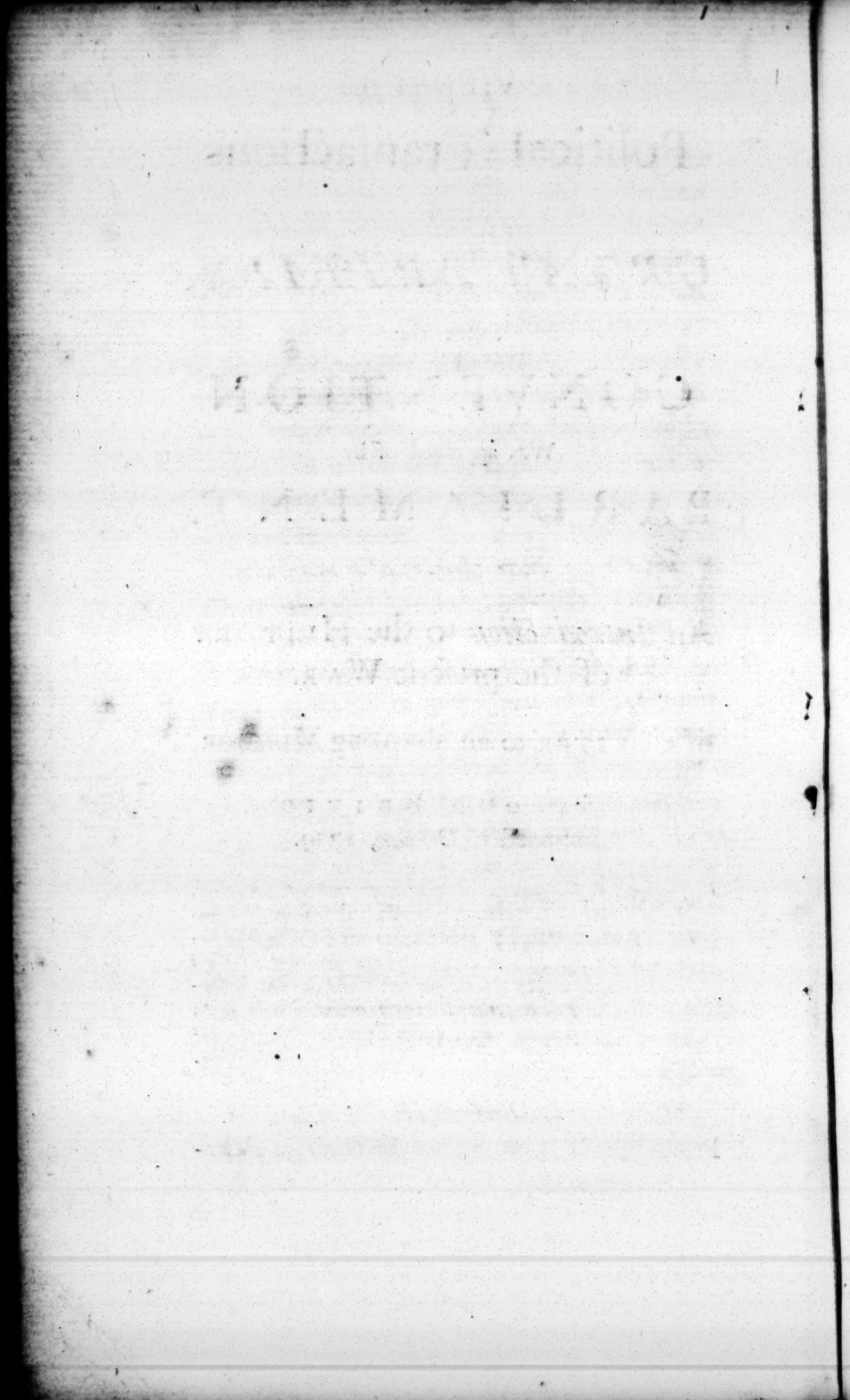
The S E C O N D E D I T I O N ,
Continued to October, 1739.

*Vos autem, P. C. quousque Rempublicam intutam patiemini,
& Verbis arma tentabis? Delectus aduersum vos ha-
biti; Pecuniae publicè & privatim extorta; Praesidia de-
ducta atque imposita; ex Lubidine Leges imperantur: Cum
interim vos legatos & decreta paratis. Et quanto, Meber-
cule, avidius Pacem petieritis, tanto acrius Bellum erit;
cum intelliget se metu magis, quam Equo Bonoque sustenta-
tur.*
SALLUST.

L O N D O N :

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A VIEW of the
TRANSACTIONS
 O F
GREAT BRITAIN, &c.

SIR,

I Cannot begin an Address to one of your Character, and in your Circumstances, in more proper Terms than in the Words of an eminent * Ancient to his Friend. *Solet esse gaudio sibi si quid aetum est in Senatu dignum ordine illo. Quamvis enim Quietis a-more secesseris, insidet tamen animo tuo Majestatis Publicæ cura.* This Concern for the *Majesty of the Publick* subsists in a virtuous Man, even after some of his more immediate Relations with the Publick are dissolved, and what in others is *Curiosity*, is in him *Patriotism*; from this Motive, I am convinced, it is that you desire I should inform you of the Transactions and State of the Public since your Retirement into the Country; which I shall, without any farther Preamble, do with all possible Brevity, and with all possible Sincerity.

* *Pliny the younger.*

It can be no Secret to you that when the Convention concluded with *Spain* was approved of by Parliament, it was openly owned by the Ministry, that the Government had no Money, and the Nation no Allies. These were indeed two very great Disadvantages, and could only be made up in the Wisdom and Diligence of our all-sufficient Minister. But an Event which happened in the North put us under new Perplexities, and upon new Expedients of procuring both the one and the other.

The only Check which the Ambition of *France* had met with for many Years was from the Power of *Russia*. While a good Understanding subsisted betwixt that Court and *Sweden*, she found it extremely difficult to prosecute her favourite Scheme of Power by settling *Stanislaus* on the Throne of *Poland*. She likewise found, that unless *Sweden* could be detached from the Interest of *Russia*, every future Project, she should set on Foot, might be equally impracticable. Her Ministers therefore employed all the Power of *Rhetoric* and of *Gold* to compass this End; nor could the Authority of the King, nor the Engagements of *Sweden* with the Court of *Russia*, prevent them from renewing that Alliance which formerly proved so useful to *France*, and so detrimental to her Neighbours.

Two Things contributed very much to cement

ment this Alliance ; the first was the Sick-
ness and Resignation of the King of *Sweden*,
the other, the Hopes which *France* gave of
assisting them in recovering the Provinces dis-
membered from their Kingdom in the Reign
of *Charles* the XIIth. This last was indeed a
powerful Incitement to *Sweden*, and the only
Means that *France* could properly employ to
oblige the Emperor to throw himself into her
Arms ; since the *Russians* must thereby be ob-
liged to make a separate Peace with the *Porte*,
and consequently all the Weight of the *Ottoman*
Empire fall on the House of *Austria*.

But one Measure was still wanting to render
this Alliance more complete, and more effec-
tual for the Purposes of *France*. This Mea-
sure was the concluding a subsidiary Treaty
with *Denmark*. For this End, very advan-
tageous Offers were made on the Part of
France ; more advantageous perhaps than it
was in the Power of any other Nation in
Europe to make, and the Differences, which
about that Time happened at *Steinborst*, gave
them a fair Prospect of Success. The *Danes*
however thought proper to accept of the Of-
fers of *Britain* and of a much less Subsidy
than that offered by *France*, and a Treaty ac-
cordingly was concluded betwixt us and
Denmark ; we paying 70,000*l.* a Year by
Way of Subsidy to the King of *Denmark*,
and he keeping on Foot a Body of Forces for

the Service of *Britain*, for which we are to pay Levy-money.

This Treaty was by Order of his Majesty laid before both Houses of Parliament, and accompanied with a Message desiring their Approbation of the same, together with a Vote of *Credit* and *Confidence*, both which after a strong Debate were agreed to.

In the mean Time, many, and those too of the most considerable for their Parts, their Fortunes and their Dignity, made several Restrictions on both Parts of this Message. The Treaty with *Denmark* was on all Hands allowed to be a proper Measure for *Britain* to take at this Juncture, not so much from any immediate Advantage that can accrue to her from such an Alliance, as by putting it less in the Power of *France* to disturb the Peace of the North. But I have heard that a great Man, once employed in concluding a Treaty of the like Nature, took Occasion at the same Time to observe, that the more a Nation sunk in Credit, the Price she pay'd for any Advantages she expected from her Neighbours, rose the higher. And that accordingly we now pay ten Crowns of Levy-money more for one Soldier than we formerly did on the like Occasions. It was indeed extremely lucky for *Britain* that the *Danish* Seamen were prevented from joining the *Brest* Squadron ; for tho' *France* had both Soldiers

and Money and Ships, yet she wanted Seamen whereof *Denmark* has now a very fine Nursery, by Means of the Indulgence which we give them of carrying their Commodities upon their own Bottoms into our Ports. Should we once deprive them of this Privilege, we lay them under inexpressible Disadvantages as to their Trade, and deprive them of the Means of keeping up so considerable a Body of able Seamen ; for it is owing to short Voyages and frequent Trips that an able Seaman is formed.

As to the Use which this Alliance can be of on the Continent, it was observed, that unless we have engaged *Prussia* likewise in our Measures, we have in Effect done nothing at all on that Hand. It is certain that this Prince has been but a cold Ally to *Britain* for many Years past. His Pretensions are very extensive, and his Power to support them, great ; so that his Friendship is of the utmost Consequence to the Purposes for which the subsidiary Treaty with *Denmark* was concluded. *France*, it is true, has hitherto affected to support the hereditary Prince of *Sulzbach* in his Claim upon the Dutchies of *Bergs* and *Juliers*, but repeated Experience has convinced the World how insignificant her Friendship is to pretending Princes, when it stands in the Way of her Interest. Therefore tho' the Friendship of *Denmark* may be of Use to *Britain* in pre-

preserving Peace on the *Baltick*, yet that is but a small Consideration when compared to the Disorders that this Nation must be involved in should the *Swedes* insist on the Restitution, not only of the Provinces conquered by *Russia* and in her Possession, but of all the other Dominions alienated from her Monarchy in the Time of *Charles* the XIIth.

The Alienation of *Bremen* and *Verden* that Prince never could digest ; for after they were purchased by the King of *Britain*, it became the ruling Passion of *Charles*'s Life to revenge the Injury which he imagined had been done him by that Alienation. And as the Spirit and Maxims of that Prince seem now to animate the whole Body of the Swedish Nobility, there is too much Reason to apprehend that they may at a convenient Juncture pursue his Schemes ; and no Juncture can be so convenient, as when *France* is her Friend, the Emperor distressed, *Britain* embroiled with *Spain*, *Prussia* divided from *Britain*, and the *Russians* drained by a long and expensive War.

Some other Considerations likewise contributed to induce the *Danes* to accept of the Offers of *Britain* before those of *France*. Such as their having an Alliance with *Russia* which has long subsisted, and is of the last Consequence to their Interest. This Alliance they must in Effect have renounced, had they

they accepted the Offers of *France*, and thereby have divided themselves from the two Powers whose Friendship is of the greatest Advantage to them, I mean *Britain* and *Russia*: Besides, tho' it is expressed in the Treaty that the Levy-money we pay is in Consideration of raising and clothing the Troops which the King of *Denmark* is obliged to furnish to *Britain*, yet it is well known that these two Articles do not put him to a Shilling of Expence, because he never has fewer than fifty Thousand Men on Foot in *Denmark* and *Norway*; whereas had he accepted the Offers of *France*, he must have furnished Sea instead of Land-forces, which would have been both more chargeable and more inconvenient.

Thus much I have thought fit to say with Regard to the Treaty concluded with *Denmark*, and I shall be glad if it can contribute towards your forming a Notion of the Situation of the Affairs in the North, where the Storm, which has been so long gathering against *Britain*, will probably first break, tho' the Attention of the Publick has of late been chiefly turned towards what has passed in the South.

The other Part of his Majesty's Message to the House of Peers contained a most gracious Demand of a Vote both of Credit and Confidence. As the Wisdom of the Parliament

ment thought fit to comply with this Demand, I am at no Liberty to make any Reflections upon the particular Reasons that induced them to this Compliance, any farther than that they seem to have arisen from the Consideration of the Exigencies that may occur from the present Disposition of Affairs in *Europe*, during the Recess of Parliament. What this Disposition is you will best perceive by the subsequent Part of this Letter ; I shall however make some general Observations on Votes of Credit and Confidence, the rather because you seem desirous to be informed of the Reasons that misled your Friends into a Dislike of this Measure.

It is allowed on all Hands that the Power of granting Money and raising Forces are the two most valuable Privileges the Parliament is possest of, and should it lose either the one or the other, the Liberties of the Subject are no longer safe ; because it in Effect lodges in the Crown a dictatorial Power, and actually sets it above the Laws. It leads a moderate Prince into Temptation, and gives an ambitious Prince an Opportunity to destroy the Rights of the Subject. This is a Truth which the Subjects both of *France* and *Spain* fatally experience at this Day ; for had not the States of the one, and the *Cortes* of the other, parted with that Power, they had still been free ; and the parting with it for but one Year subverted

verted the Liberties of *Spain*, nor has she ever been able to recover them. But the Constitution of *Britain* seems to have a particular Aversion to vesting in the King a Power of raising Men during a Time of Peace. For by the Mutiny Bill the keeping up an Army in Time of Peace is expressly said to be against the Laws of the Kingdom, and the whole Number of Troops to be kept up by that Bill is restricted to 17704 Men. So that the agreeing to a Vote of Confidence seems in Effect, a destroying an *Act*, by a *Resolution* of Parliament.

As to the Vote of Credit ; it at first Sight likewise seems liable to very great Difficulties. Votes of Credit, 'tis true, have been several Times granted without any Vote of Confidence, yet many were of Opinion, that the more seldom any such Stretch was made, and the seldomer the Crown was complimented with such a Power, the Rights and Properties of the Subject were so much the more secure. For tho' there does not appear to be the same Repugnance in our Constitution against granting to the Crown the Power of raising Money, as there is against that of raising Men, yet the same Inconveniences attend both ; for a King of *Great Britain*, who has Money, can never want Men, if he has a Mind to make a bad Use of his Power. Besides, it is to be considered that a wanton Ex-

ercise of this Right, of vesting the Crown with extraordinary Powers of raising Money, may make the Practice of it grow so habitual, that Parliaments may become entirely useless, or if they should prove refractory, the Crown may rule without them. Nay some of the greatest Men in the Nation were heard to say on this Occasion, that they believed the Ministry made this Demand, not in order to supply any real Exigency which the Situation of their Affairs may now create, but, by introducing the Practice of making such Demands, to pave the Way for renewing them annually, and thereby becoming entirely independent of the Parliament.

I shall now take the Liberty to make some particular Observations upon the Propriety of granting such a Demand at this Juncture.

The granting to the Ministry a Vote of *Credit* and *Confidence* being, as we have seen, of the utmost Importance to the Liberty of the Subject, it is a very natural Question to ask; What Proofs have those in the Ministry given of their Zeal for the Honour and Interest of the Nation? What Proofs have they given of their Skill of making either Peace or War to deserve so extensive a Trust? If they can answer, that when they were strengthened with former Grants of this Kind, the Power and Money lodged in their Hands were employed in asserting the Dignity of the Crown and

and the just Rights of the Subjects ; if they were employed in reducing foreign Enemies, or quelling domestic Insurrections ; and the Sums raised properly accounted for to Parliament ; the Representatives of the People were well warranted in the generous Confidence they again reposed in the Ministry at this Juncture.

But if on the other Hand, notwithstanding the excessive extraordinary Sums that have been raised on the People ; notwithstanding the heavy ordinary Taxes under which they groan, and notwithstanding their paying both a numerous Army and Fleet, their Trade is ruined, and their Reputation sunk Abroad ; the most valuable Rights of their Commerce disputed by a Rival, formidable only by our Pusillanimity ; if we have to do with a Ministry, which for the Space of nineteen Years has never once *deviated* into Right, but gone on from one Degree of blundering to an other, that Ministry is surely not to be trusted with Powers which may place them above the Fears of being called to an Account for their scandalous Mismanagement.

Having said thus much, it is but Justice to inform you of the Reasons which the Friends of the Administration advanced in Support of this Measure.

It is certain that in former Times, when the Funds for the Service of the current

Year were laid on, they were laid on without any Appropriations, so that no unforeseen Exigency could happen, in which the Government was not at Liberty to apply the Money raised by Parliament on that Exigency happening. This was the Method of laying on the Publick Funds till after the Revolution, when it was found inconvenient and hurtful to the Subject. The Parliament then thought proper to make Appropriations of every Sum so raised, which put it out of the Power of the Ministry to apply the publick Money in any other Manner than what the Parliament directed. So that upon an unforeseen Emergency, the Crown may be at a Loss for Money, it not being at Liberty to apply it in the Manner that calls for the most immediate Supply. Hence arose the Expediency and Fitness of Credit to the Crown.

The bad Use that may be made of the Money so raised, it was contended, is merely chimerical, since the Ministry is equally accountable for the Money so raised, as if it was actually appropriated by Parliament. Therefore a Minister really lies, in some Sense, under a Disadvantage by being left inexcusable in case the Exigency is not answered, since he is otherwise no farther accountable, than for the Uses to which the Funds he has in his Hands are appropriated.

It being therefore laid down as a Maxim, that it may be sometimes both proper and necessary to grant to the King a Vote of Credit, the Question then is, What is the proper Time when such a Necessity may occur? The fairest and most solid Answer to this is; When the Situation of the national Affairs is such, that unforeseen Exigencies may occur when the King has no Opportunity of taking the Sense of his great Council.

The whole therefore is upon the Application reduced to the following Point, viz. Whether the Time and the Exigency, on which the Vote we are now considering was agreed to, answer that Description. This Question is best resolved by the following short View of the Matter of Fact as it then stood.

Spain, by the Convention concluded betwixt her and *Great Britain*, had put herself under an Obligation to pay 95,000*l.* to the Merchants of *Great Britain*, in Consideration of the Damages they had sustained by piratical Depredations, and the Day of Payment at *London* was to be the 8th or 10th Day after the Message, desiring the Vote of Credit, came to the Parliament. As this Event was by most People looked upon to be decisive of Peace or War, it was by many thought that the Motion would have been more proper after the 24th, the Day stipulated for the Payment

ment of the *Spaniſh Money*, was expired. In that Case the Parliament could have supplied his Majesty proportionable to the Exigency that might occur ; either by granting a larger Sum if a War was judged unavoidable, or by a more moderate Credit, if it was judged uncertain. This would have prevented all the Jealousies that arose from the vast Trust that such a Grant reposed in a Ministry obnoxious to many weak, but perhaps well meaning Persons ; and likewise have been the Means of his Majesty's farther endearing himself to the judging and well-affected Part of his Subjects.

To these Facts and Reasonings may be added the Effect of that Expence which the Nation was at in their Armament last Year. No visible good Consequences for the Interest of this Kingdom have as yet arisen from that Armament. *Spain* continued her Depredations in as violent a Manner as she did before the Convention was concluded, and her Ministers, from what appeared to the World, were more averse to conclude a definitive Treaty upon the Foot of that Convention, than ever.

This Consideration damped the Zeal of many for their Measure, and made others suspect that it was advised by the Ministry for no other End, than to have the Means in their Hands of prolonging the useless and destruc-

tive Negotiations with *Spain*, or of gaining a Delay of the national Vengeance that they imagined was ready to burst upon their Heads.

Your own good Sense, Sir, will suggest to you how unimportant these Facts, how weak these Reasonings, and how ill grounded these Surmises were, to imply the postponing of this Measure. When the Affair came to be properly weighed, it was found that we had other Foes to dread than *Spain*, and other Interests to take Care of than those of our Merchants. The fair and equitable Account that the Ministry has always given of the Money thus raised is Proof sufficient that it will be applied to those Purposes for which the Majority, who voted for such a Measure, intended it should. And not to have agreed to such a Demand when it was once made, would have argued a Distrust in the Parliament of his Majesty, which might have given *Spain* a Handle of insisting upon higher Terms, and the disaffected an Opportunity of Triumph.

I shall now proceed to another Event which gave Rise to various Speculations and a good deal of Discourse ; and in relating it shall keep to the same Method and Form I have already done, by giving each Side of the Argument its full Weight ; that being the only Means of setting the Conduct of our excellent Ministry in its true Light, and doing Justice to their Abilities.

No-

Nothing can be more reasonable than that the Children of the Royal Family, even in the most mournful Event, should be provided for, suitable to their Birth and Dignity. Therefore his Majesty was pleased to send another most gracious Message to his Parliament, desiring that they would settle 39,000*l.* a Year upon the Duke and the four Princesses, and that in the following Proportions, *viz.* 15,000*l.* a Year upon the Duke, and 6000*l.* upon each of the Princesses, the same to commence from the Accession of the next Successor to the Crown.

Even this Step, just and equitable as it was, met with strong Objections without Doors. It is certain that next to the Powers which the Parliament vests in the Crown by an unlimited Credit, nothing is so dangerous to the People as a large Civil-list. The Civil-list at present, with the Excrencencies, is computed at upwards of 900,000*l.* Now it is experimentally known that Civil-lists are of an increasing Nature, and that every King is, as it were, set up at Auction by Ministers who want to manage him; one Minister offering to make his Civil-list larger than his Predecessors by so many Thousand Pounds, and another outbidding him, and the greater Incumbrances that are upon the Revenue, the more specious are the Arguments for such an Augmentation; nor are there any Instance of a Re-

Reduction of the Revenue even after the Causes of the Augmentation cease.

Many were doubtful if this Settlement would be thought so binding by a succeeding Prince, as not to endeavour to repeal it by a subsequent Act of Parliament, and most were of Opinion that if such a Repeal was carried, it would encrease the Power of the Crown without contributing to the Ease of the Subject ; for the Civil-list would in that Case continue the same, nor would the Reasons, why so large a one was granted, ever be considered by the Ministry, nor any Regard had to these Reasons no longer existing.

A Parallel Case in the present Reign was brought ; it was insisted on, that when the Parliament granted so large a Civil-list, it was with a View that the Prince of *Wales* should have at least 100,000*l.* a Year. The Prince of *Wales*, it is well known, does not enjoy above half that Sum, yet the Civil-list still continues the same, nor is the Sum thereby saved, so far, at least, as appears to the World, any Way applied to the Uses of the Public. By this Method of continuing Effects when the true Causes cease, the Civil-list may be encreased so as to become unwieldy, overgrown, and like the *Trojan Horse*, pregnant with Mischiefs ; nay, many, who did not pretend to prophesy, pretended to foresee, that in order to admit this fa-

tal Machine, the Walls of the Constitution may be one Day broken down.

Other Circumstances greatly heightned the Reluctance of many to approve of this Measure. When the Civil-list was given, no Doubt Consideration was had to the Queen's Household, and it was generally thought that by her Majesty's Death 50,000 *l.* at least was saved; yet we have not hitherto heard that this was any Saving to the Nation, nor have we any Grounds to believe, that by this Saving any Addition will be made to the Appointments of the Prince of *Wales*, or any Fund laid up as independent Provisions to the other Branches of the Royal Family.

This brings me to an Objection which some had to the Decency with which this Affair was carried on. The Duke and the Princesses they admitted had a Right to be provided for, because they are Royal Personages, and Personages for whom all dutiful Subjects ought to have a very high Regard, and for whose Safety we daily join in the publick Prayers of the Church. But there are in the Nation other Branches of the Royal Family, and those too more nearly related to the Crown, who are not only unprovided for, but unprayed for. It would have therefore been highly becoming the Regard which the Nation has for the Royal Family, if the publick Funds can bear it, to have made an even-

tual

Actual Provision for the Royal Infants suitable to their Birth and Dignity.

As to the Provision of fifteen Thousand Pounds to his Royal Higness the Duke of *Cumberland*, I have heard it spoken of by all Parties amongst us, as a very moderate Allowance, perhaps too moderate for a second Son of *Britain*. But very strong Obje&ions lay to the Manner in which it was granted.

His Royal Highness in a Year or two becomes of Age, consequently he has then a Right to sit and vote in the great Council of the Kingdom, and therefore ought to be as independent as any Lord who is a Member of that House. He ought to be under no Influence, but the Good of his Country, and to have no Dependance but on his steady and constant Adherence to the Rights which communicate to him his Dignity, and of which he then becomes a Guardian. As the Example of his Conduct is of the utmost Consequence in determining the Conduct of others, it is therefore highly important that neither Fears nor Hopes should determine his. For what Idea would Foreigners have of the *Independency* of our Legislature, if the second Person of that House depended on the Will of another for his daily Subsistence? and what Notions might they not entertain of our *Wisdom*, if he was the only Person in the House who had such a Dependency? The na-

tural Duties a Son owes to a Father ought indeed to be sacred and inviolable, but at the same Time they ought to determine in the natural Capacity which is reciprocal to both, nor ought they ever to influence the political Relation that subsists betwixt the Prince, his Parliament and the People. His Majesty himself would detest any such Influence, and it can only serve the Purposes of the Minister through whose Hands this precarious Subsistence is to pass.

Upon the whole therefore, I never heard any one, however averse to the Ministry, object to his Royal Highness the Duke being put in Possession of the fifteen Thousand Pounds a Year, provided it was by Way of independent Provision, and he to enter into Possession, either on the Commencement of the Act of Parliament, or as soon as he became of Age.

As to the Settlements on the Princesses, it was observed that the eldest Daughter alone of *England* formerly had a parliamentary Provision, and that there is no Instance upon Record of any Application made to the Parliament in Favour of other Daughters: Nor indeed is there any Instance of annual Settlement during Life being made by the King with Consent of the Parliament, before that made on the present Princess of *Orange*. But the great Merits and the low Circumstances
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of the Family of *Orange*, and the national Gratitude for their Deliverance by Means of a Prince of that Family, demanded such an Acknowledgment.

To all these Reasonings it was added, that such a Concession could not be made without dispensing with a positive Act of Parliament, which binds the King up from disposing of any of the hereditary Dominions of the Crown longer than during his own Life, and that if any Time was ever improper for making any Alterations in the Acts that regulated the Economy of the Revenue, the present Time certainly is.

These Objections, Sir, have so little Weight in them, that I am persuaded you will not think it needful for me to use a great many Words by Way of Reply. As to the Objection of the Prince's Children not being provided for, that is too delicate Ground to tread upon, therefore it may be prudent to dismiss it. Besides, it is nothing to the Purpose ; their being unprovided for can never be a Reason why others should. As to the Independency of the Duke when he comes of Age, we have seen so many Instances of the Disinterestedness of our Minister, that we can have no Reason to fear any Thing of that Kind. Besides, to make him quite independent, would be breaking in upon a fundamental Maxim of our Government,
and

and you know it is extremely dangerous, and may be fatal to make any Innovations upon fundamental Points of Government.

Dispensing with an Act of Parliament can never be thought of any Consequence, when we consider that it has been dispensed with already, particularly in the Settlement made by the Parliament on Prince *George* in Queen *Anne's* Time. But what made this Measure absolutely necessary and expedient is, the great Defect under which our Constitution labours, by not determining who shall be Regent in Case of a Minority. There is but one Life betwixt his Majesty and the Right of an Infant in the Cradle to the Crown, in which Event (which Heaven avert) a Regent must necessarily be appointed; so that the Tyes of Nature dictated to his Majesty, as a Parent, that his inoffending Children should be provided for.

I now hasten to an Affair of greater Importance, of greater Expectation, and of greater Difficulty. An Affair, on which so much has been wrote, and so much has been said, that you perhaps think the Subject is now exhausted. But, Sir, it is quite otherwise. Political Events always afford new Speculation, and new Subject of Reasoning as they happen, in Proportion as the Hinges on which they turn, the Interests to which they are directed, and the Passions by which they are influenced, are kept secret from the Public.

lic. Could we at one View penetrate into all these different Motives of Action, one might almost upon mechanical Principles account for what is past, and foresee what is to come ; and in such a Case we should be beholden to Contingencies alone, for the Subject of our Reflection and Reasoning.

In Order to place the Subject, I am now to consider, in a new Light, I shall take a View of the several Periods of our History in which our commercial Affairs with *Spain* were adjusted. I doubt not but from this View, you will be convinced that according to the Maxims of the *Spaniſh* Monarchy, which by long Usage have received the Force of fundamental Laws, the Interest of *Great Britain* and *Spain* in the *West-Indies*, in their present Situation, are incompatible. And this Review I hope is the more seasonable, as we are now on the Crisis of a Negotiation, whose Event determines the Fate of this Nation, I had almost said, of *Europe*, if the Fate of either can depend on the Accession of the Trade and Wealth of this Kingdom to a Power already too formidable.

The first Treaty, that according to my present Scheme I am to mention, was that concluded betwixt *Spain* and *England* 1630. The only Use I make of it is to observe, that all the Influences of the *Spaniſh* Counsels at the Court of *Britain*, at that Time, could not

vail with the *English* to lay themselves under any Obligation not to trade with the *Spaniſh West-Indies*, so that this Treaty did, in Effect, nothing towards settling a Peace betwixt the two Nations in the *West-Indies*. Such an Uncertainty occasioned perpetual Disputes and Invasions on the Parts of the *English* and *Spaniards* there, which commonly terminated in Favour of the *English*: And this Jumble of Peace and War continued to the Year 1667, when a general Treaty of Commerce was concluded with *Spain* by the Earl of *Sandwich* then Ambassador at that Court.

The only Article in this Treaty, that is applicable to the *American* Navigation and Commerce, is the eighth, by which we are to enjoy the same Privileges in our Commerce with the *Spaniſh West-Indies*, that were granted to the *Dutch* by the Treaty of *Munster*, but at the same Time the Methods of searching, visiting and navigating the Ships of both Nations, as laid down by that Treaty, are to be observed as well in *America* as in *Europe*. These were very dark and unintelligible Stipulations, and therefore it was no Wonder if, during the two succeeding Years, the Depredations on both Sides rose to a greater Height than ever. But the Earl of *Sandwich* was a better Seaman than a Politician ; his Predecessor in that Embassy, who drew up the Treaty, Sir *Richard Fanshaw*, was better read in

in Books than in Men, and the Minister the Earl of *Arlington*, the main Spring of all the Negotiations, had too narrow Notions both in Commerce and Government, to be the Author of any Thing that could be beneficial to either.

Yet the Government at that Time, corrupted and mean as it was, had so much good Sense left as to know the natural Strength of *England* and the Weakness of *Spain*; accordingly they carried it with a high Hand. As they were sensible of the Advantages which *Industry* and *Commerce* has over *Luxury* and unapplied *Wealth*, they knew how disproportioned the Strength of the *Spanish* Government; and the Virtue of the Inhabitants were to the unwieldy Bulk of their Monarchy, and at the same Time how inconsiderable the Properties of their own Colonists in *America* were, when compared to the vast Spirit of Trade in some, the boundless Desire of Riches in others, and the indefatigable Resolution in all. On comparing the Circumstances of both, they could easily discern, amongst the *Spaniards*, Pride supported by Riches; amongst their own Subjects, Industry prompted by Want; amongst the *Spaniards*, the vast Distance from their chief Seat of Government encouraged Oppression in the Governors; in their own Colonies, the same Cause produced an obstinate and an almost uncontrollable Pursuit of Wealth amongst

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the People. In short, the *Spanish* Governors could only grow rich at the Expence of their own Subjects, and the *English* at the Expence of the *Spaniards*.

Therefore the Government in *England*, at that Time, behaved towards *Spain* with great Haughtiness. Sir *Richard Fanshaw*, who was sent Embassador thither in the Year 1664, was ordered by his Instructions to insist upon a Liberty to trade with the *Spanish Indies*, exclusive of all other Nations ; and when any Complaints were made of Depredations by the *English*, our Court at first indeed used a great many fair Words ; but when it came to Proofs and Facts, and when Excuses would no longer do, we told the *Spaniards* roundly, that if they were to expect any Discontinuance of those Depredations, they must admit us into a Share of their *West-Indian* Trade.

But two Circumstances perhaps, in some Measure, prevented the *English* from making all the Advantages of these Dispositions in the Subjects of both Nations, which they might otherwise have obtained ; the first was the Danger lest their own Subjects, most of whom were Privateers and not a few Free-booters, by too great Acquisition of *Spanish* Property, might prove refractory, and perhaps shake off their Allegiance. The other was, the Danger lest the other Powers of *Europe* should interpose in Behalf of the *Spaniards*.

Spaniards. These might be the Reasons, together with a Remission of a vast Sum of Money due by *England* to *Spain*, why Sir *William Godolpbin*, in the Year 1670, concluded the *American Treaty*, which was more definitive than the former, and expressly adapted to the Interests of both Crowns in *America*.

These Reasons however are far from excusing our giving up the vast Advantages we might have pretended to, had we never agreed to that Treaty, and which must have put a firm disinterested Government above the Fears of any bad Consequences, either from the Dispositions of their own Subjects, or the Jealousy of their Neighbours. Yet this Treaty, bad as it was, if it had been, or if it were now, punctually observed by *Spain*, would have prevented all the subsequent Differences in Points of Commerce betwixt the two Nations in *America*.

The express prohibitory Clause restraining the Subjects of either Nation from trading with the other in *America*, and the Clause of *Uti possidetis* inserted in that Treaty, were thought the sure Means of ascertaining the Properties and Pretensions of both Nations. But they were far from having that Effect. The *Spanish* Subjects, and even their Governors could not subsist without such a Commerce, and as no Penalties were inflicted by

us upon our Subjects for carrying it on, too many Advantages attended it, for them to comply with the Terms of the Treaty. This was not at first understood at the Court of *Spain*, and when it came to be understood, instead of putting their own Governors under due Regulations in that Respect, they constructed the Treaty so, as not only to render it in some Senses destructive to the *English*, but in Effect, to imply an exclusive Sovereignty of the *American* Seas in their own Favour. For in the Year 1672, we find the Queen Regent of *Spain* issues out a Schedula which absolutely destroyed our Logwood Trade, by empowering the Subjects of *Spain* to seize all *English* Ships trading to the *Laguna de Terminos*, tho' we were indisputably in Possession of the Logwood Trade there before the Year 1667, and consequently had an undoubted Right to it by the *American* Treaty. Accordingly in that Year an *English* Ship was seized, having Logwood on Board, and from that Seizure we may date the Rise of the *Spanish* Depredations, which have proved since so fatal to *Britain*. A Detail of our commercial Affairs in the *West-Indies* to the Treaty of *Utrecht* would exceed the Bounds of a Letter, and be foreign to my present Purpose.

The next Period I am to survey is that when the Treaty of *Utrecht* was concluded; by this

this Treaty, not only all former Treaties were renewed and confirmed, but we likewise obtained a Privilege of sending an annual Ship to the *West-Indies*. This was an alluring Motive to *England* for giving up other Advantages, which she might have claimed at that Juncture. And there is not the least Doubt that these Stipulations are very favourable, had we not to do with a People who disregard not only the Ties of Honour, but even their own Interest, when found to clash with those romantic Notions and those bigotted Maxims to which they are so obstinately addicted.

But it must be owned, that several Over-sights were committed on the Part of our Ministry in this Point at that Time ; the first was, their not observing how ineffectual the Treaties thus confirmed had been for the Interest of *Britain* when the *Spaniards* found the least Pretext to break them. We ought therefore to have insisted on having in our Hands the Means of using a coercive Power in Case of any Violation of their Faith ; and this might easily have been effected, by our obtaining a Settlement on their Coasts more centrical for our Ships to be stationed at, and consequently more convenient for bridling their Insolence, than any we now possess in the *West-Indies*. The Powers by which their *Guarda Costas* act ought likewise to have been settled, and the Bounds of their Stations more precisely adjusted.

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Another Oversight committed by our Ministry in that Treaty lay in their putting the *South-Sea Company* on such a Foot, as to depend upon a good Correspondence betwixt them and the Court of *Britain*, betwixt the King of *Spain* and them, and a good Correspondence betwixt the Courts of *London* and *Madrid*; any of these happening not to be the Case that Trade is ruined. So that, in Effect, the Company is under the Necessity of becoming the Tools of two Courts, and a perpetual Bone of Contention betwixt two sovereign Powers. Besides, as Matters have been managed by that Company, theirs and this Nation's Interest have been separated. For as I observed before, we were undoubtedly possest of a good Right to the Logwood Trade on the Bay of *Campeachy* by the Treaty of 1670, and it was a Right we ought never to have given up, because the very same Reasons, that may be urged for our giving up that Trade, may be urged for our giving up our Right to *Jamaica*, which we keep only by the Virtue of Possession, we never having been able to oblige the *Spaniards* to give an express Renunciation of their Right to that Island. The Attack made upon our Settlement in *Campeachy* in the Year 1716, and our Dispossession ought never to have been forgot or forgiven, till ample Satisfaction had been made by *Spain*, and the

the rather because, instead of leaving the *British Subjects* eight Months for removing with their Effects, as the *Spanish Minister* had promised in his Letter, the Attack was made, and the Injury done before that very Letter was communicated to the Court of *Britain*. What was the Conduct of the *South Sea Company* upon this villainous Treatment? They took a Lease of this very Trade from the King of *Spain*, and thereby became in some Measure the Guarantees of his Right to our Settlement in *Campeachy*: From the Time of the Commencement of this Lease, the *South Sea Company* looked upon every Ounce of *Logwood* on Board a *British Ship* coming from *Campeachy* as their Property, and every such Voyage as an Invasion of their Rights. Nay if we may credit what some give out, formal Complaints have been entered by them at the Court of *Madrid* against the Remissness of their *Guarda Costas*, in not seizing and confiscating the *British Vessels* employed in that Trade. I shall not pursue this Subject any farther, since I believe those Gentlemen's Eyes are now opened, and they find to their Experience how precarious that Trade must be, that depends on the good Correspondence betwixt two Nations absolutely the Reverse of one another in their Principles, Dispositions, Politics and Interests.

The next Period of Time I am to survey is the Year 1721; which produced little remarkable that can serve my present Purpose, besides the 5th Article of the Treaty then concluded with *Spain*, by which Article we are to indemnify his Catholick Majesty for the Ships taken by Sir *George Bing* in 1718, by restoring the Ships in the same Condition they were then in, or refunding the Money paid by the Purchasers in Case any of them were sold. This was a remarkable Stipulation, and serves greatly to elucidate a Part of what follows. There is another Circumstance in that Treaty which I must observe; and that is, the omitting to confirm the *American* Treaty, which is the Foundation of all the Regulations of Trade betwixt us and *Spain* in the *West-Indies*. What makes this Omission the more remarkable, is that the Treaty of *Utrecht* is mentioned as containing a Confirmation of the Treaty in 1667 only; whereas the *American* Treaty is confirmed in the very same Article of the Treaty of *Utrecht*, and it was impossible to have overlooked it, if it was looked into at all.

To enumerate the several Traverses of our Navigations with *Spain* antecedent to the famous Treaty of *Sevile*, would exceed the Bounds of my present Design; I shall therefore proceed to that remarkable Period.

It might have been reasonably presumed, that when so long, so various, and intricate a Round of Negotiations with the Court of *Spain* was over, a proper System of the commercial Interests betwixt the two Crowns might have been digested, and the general Rights of both settled in such precise Terms, that no particular Facts could have afterwards created a Misunderstanding. There was a plain, an easy, and a ready Rule, by which such a System might have been formed, which was an explanatory Confirmation of the mutual Prohibition of Trade stipulated by the eighth Article of the *American Treaty*, according to the obvious Sense which it imports. This, I say, was the least that could in Reason have been expected at that Time. But what was done? The very Mention of the *American Treaty* was omitted; the Restitution of such Ships, as were taken confessedly in Violation of the Law of Nations, and our positive Rights, was stipulated, and the Ships that were taken carrying on a *contraband* Trade left in Possession of the Captors. Therefore as the Mention of the *American Treaty* was omitted, the Stipulations in the Treaty 1667 were the only Rules by which the Legality of a Capture could be determined. Now these Stipulations principally regarding the *European Trade*, when applied to the *American Trade* alone, made every Ship of ours

taken by the *Spaniards* with their Commodities on Board, lawful Prize. For there is no Doubt but that a Ship may be a lawful Prize on the Coast of *Spain*, which if taken, tho' with the same Circumstances attending her Navigation on the *American Coast*, would be very illegal. It was therefore a monstrous Blunder in our Ministers, when they reclaimed any Ship taken by the *Spaniards*, to found their Complaints on the Violation of the fourteenth Article of the Treaty of 1667, as we evidently see they have done.

Upon the whole, therefore, it is plain, that the Negotiators of the Treaty of *Seville*, seem to have been ignorant that such a Treaty as that of 1607 was existing, otherwise there was not a Ship of ours then in Possession of the *Spaniards* but might and ought to have been reclaimed as unlawful Prize, and the Captors severely punished. The other Defects in that Treaty and their Consequences have been already so well and so accurately pointed out to the World, that I shall not pretend to make any farther Observations upon it.

I hope this Detail will not be thought an impertinent Introduction to the following Narrative, since it serves to let us see that one capital Mistake has run thro' all our late Negotiations with the Court of *Madrid*; which is, our imagining that *Spain* ever will

be the Friend of *Britain*, while she has no other Ties but those of Faith and Justice. To pretend to bind her with these is the same Thing as to leave a Highwayman at large upon his Parole of Honour. At the same Time, tho' we should reduce her to accept of what Terms we had a Mind to impose, it would be impolitic, it would be dangerous for us, in the present Situation of Affairs, to impose any other than those stipulated by that very Treaty which is yet in Force, but has by our late Negotiators been neglected, forgot, and, as far as in them lay, cancelled.

I shall now proceed to the last Master-piece of our negotiating Policy, I mean the famous Convention. You may remember, Sir, that the Advocates for the Ministry in their Declamations on that Subject insisted, that the Payment of the 95,000*l.* stipulated by the Crown of *Spain*, was in Effect a Dis-avowal on her Part of all the Infractions of Treaties which she has been guilty of. For to what Purpose, said they, would that Prince stipulate the Payment of a Sum con-fessedly due on his Part for the Violation of our Rights, unless upon a Conviction that these Rights subsist in us, and consequently that he is resolved we should have no Cause of Complaint on that Head for the future? After your Retirement this was the whole Language of the Party; they triumphed,

they exulted, they appealed to the Understandings of the People, and in short the Merit of the Negotiation was to stand or fall by this single Event.

It was in vain to tell them that this 95,000*l.* was but a poor Consideration when compared to the vast Losses we had sustained, and the important Regulations that the precarious Circumstances of our Trade, in its present Situation, require. It was in vain to tell them that this Sum, unequal as it was to our just Demands, never would be paid by *Spain*; and that all her View in this Stipulation was to gain Time to strengthen herself with Alliances, and to lay the Foundation of those Disturbances that may divert our Arms, and render the Force, that is left us to employ against her, impotent and ineffectual.

To this it was replied, that four Months would determine it, that the *Spanish* Court would never dare to trifle with us, while our Fleet lay on their Coasts, ready to reduce them to Reason. At last, *Expectata dies aderat*, no Account of the Payment of the Money! no Apology, no Reason assigned for not paying it! and in the mean Time a Bill was carrying through both Houses, with a Clause enabling his Majesty to pay the 60,000*l.* due by the Crown of *England* to that of *Spain* by the Treaty of 1621.

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This seemed to be a very embarrassing Point. No publick Notification was given of the Money's being paid by *Spain*, and if it was not paid, the Question was, how far it would be proper for us to fulfil our Engagements with *Spain*, while all her Engagements with us were unfulfilled. For it is plain, that by our paying 60,000 *l.* to the Merchants, we pay a Debt owing by the Crown of *Spain*, which is the same Thing as if we paid it to the Crown of *Spain* immediately. Besides, if the Non-payment of the Money breaks the Convention, the King of *Spain* would still hold us to be Debtors to him in that 60,000 *l.* even tho' it was applied towards discharging this Debt, because it was applied in Consequence of a cancell'd Obligation.

But as nothing would be regularly done on that Head, before the Crown should signify to the Nation whether the Money was paid or not, it was thought by many that it would be highly expedient for the Parliament to address his Majesty to know whether the 95,000 *l.* was paid or not ; and if it was not paid, to know what Reasons were given on the Part of *Spain* for the Non-payment. An Address in these Terms was accordingly moved for, but the Motion was not complied with ; a noble Peer having it seems *Leave* from his Majesty to inform the House that the Money neither was paid, nor any Reasons assigned on

on the Part of *Spain* for the Non-payment.

We could scarce believe without Doors that any Servant of his Majesty's would take it upon himself to return a verbal Answer to a Question that never was put; especially a Question from the greatest and most august Council in the Nation. For by what Authority could he inform the King, that such an Address was to be moved for? Nay, tho' such a Commission was given him in Charge, yet it was thought a great Proof of the noble Peer's Courage to step in betwixt his Majesty and the Parliament. Those, who were not acquainted with the Zeal and Disinterestedness of the Ministry, were apt to think that this Answer was returned to exclude all the Members who had voted against the Convention, from having any Access to his Majesty's Person.

But when we were better informed, we entertained a different Way of thinking; we found that Time was very precious, and that the Manner, in which the House had received the Answer from the Throne, was the most proper Manner for saving Time, and for letting the Parliament and the Nation see that the Ministry had no Intention to trifle with them. Besides, the Motion itself was liable to great Exceptions; for all that is done in Cases of addressing the Throne, is humbly to desire that his Majesty would order his Secre-

Secretary of State or the proper Officer, to lay before them such and such Papers, that they may from them receive the proper Lights and Information, which his Majesty may comply with or not, as he thinks proper. Besides the Answer given to the House upon this Occasion was the very same that would have been given in Case the Address had been actually presented.

They who were dissatisfied with this insisted that the Parliament had a just and undoubted Right to have personal Access to his Majesty ; and that if ever there was a Time proper for them to exert such a Right, it was the present ; when it appeared by the Conduct of *Spain*, that she had all along no other View in concluding the Convention, than to gain Time till she should see what might happen from the Situation of the Affairs of *Europe*, that might embarrass our Councils and divert our Arms. This had been again and again foretold by those in the Opposition, but it does not at all appear, that any of the Ministry had been at the Pains to inform his Majesty of a Truth so essential to the Welfare of his Kingdoms ; so that it was now high Time for the Parliament to take an Opportunity of being introduced to the Royal Presence ; it was now high Time for them to communicate their Sentiments to his Majesty, and for his Majesty to return his Answers,

Answers, without either of them using the Medium of a Minister.

In such a Case, his Majesty's known Attachment to the Rights, both of his Parliament and People, did not leave them the least Ground to doubt, that their Instances would be attended with the wished for Success, especially as we have several Generals and Admirals now alive whom we can trust, Men who have always distinguished themselves on the Side of Liberty; who fought in the glorious Battles of *Blenheim* and *Ramillies*, and who have helped to chastise the very Power that now insults us. It was likewise insisted upon, that Parliaments in former Times understood no Delicacy with Regard to Ministers: Ministers of State were once Servants of the People, and there was a Time when the Parliament signified their Orders to the Minister without the Intervention of the King. An Instance was produced, wherein upon a Complaint to the House of Peers against the Breach of Privilege, the offending Party having fled to *Holland*, the House commanded the Secretary of State, to write to the *States of Holland*, and reclaim the Offender. Therefore if the present had been a Question to be resolved by a Minister, the House needed not have applied to his Majesty, because their own Orders were sufficient to oblige a Minister. But that was not the Case, for they

they who moved for the Question seemed resolved, that the Parliament should impart their Advice to his Majesty in Person.

As to the Motion's being irregular, because it was moved that his Majesty should be addressed to give them an immediate Answer ; it was rightly observed, that in former Times a Parliament has been known to address the King, to know by what Minister's Advice such or such a Measure was taken. This unanswerably proved that Parliaments have address'd the Throne in the Terms of the Motion then made, and that there was a Time when Ministers were accountable to the Parliament. It was likewise insisted on, that the House had a Right inherent in itself, of calling for what Papers, Record, or Persons they thought fit, as appears from their Instructions to all their Committees. So that upon the whole, this Address seemed not to be pushed on Account of any Information that the House expected, either from the Throne or the Ministry, but in Order to prepare the Way for a personal Access to his Majesty, and to lay a regular Foundation towards a parliamentary Enquiry into the Reasons why *Spain* had refused to fulfil her Engagements. But it was not difficult to foresee where such an Enquiry might end. It was not difficult to foresee, that if the Crown had publickly returned an Answer to the Parliament, signifying that the Mo-

ney was not paid, the Ministry must be brought to the Dilemma of giving all the Nation and all *Europe* to know, that they were grossly insulted and abused by the Court of *Madrid*, without having the Spirit to resent it; or they must have immediately proclaimed War.

Be that as it will, it was carried by a Majority of thirteen, that the House had received a parliamentary Answer to this Question, upon which they resolved to take the State of the Nation into Consideration. *A State which, as a noble Peer said, was more fit for Meditation than Discourse.* That they might proceed the more regularly, it was necessary for them to find that the Convention was broken, and that at the same Time the Breach of it was a notorious Insult offered to his Majesty, as well as an Injury done the Kingdom. This Motion was ushered in by a most pathetic Speech from the same noble Peer. He shewed that Spain held the Nation in such Contempt, that she was resolved to have nothing to do with us, and not even to fulfil the Terms that were evidently advantageous to herself. The Payment of the 95,000 l. was certainly so, because had she paid it, she gave us an Earnest of her Disposition to fulfil the Convention, and she might have brought Home her Plate-fleet without any Molestation from us. Therefore it seemed very plain that
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there was an End of all treating with *Spain*, and that no Manner of Stress was to be laid on Promises, and no Faith given to her Stipulations.

What the particular Reasons are, that could induce *Spain* to act in this Manner, is a Problem not very hard to be resolved. She is at present in a very low State; her Sailors are starving for Want of Bread, and her Soldiers ready to mutiny for Want of Pay, yet she behaves as insolently as if the Treasures of the *Indies* were at her Disposal, and her invincible Armadoes were again under Sail. This must proceed from one of two Causes, or perhaps from both. The first is a thorough Contempt for our Court, grounded on the Observation of the Weakness, and the Inconsistency of our Councils, and the Impunity which has all along attended the grossest Insults they have offered to his Majesty, and the deepest Wounds they have given to the Honour of the Nation. Or it must be owing to the Hopes of being supported by some other Power. The only Way to remove the first of these Motives is a Change of Measures, and retrieving by our Arms what had been lost by our Counsels. But while the same Counsels that have brought us into this miserable Situation prevail, we have Reason to entertain but very faint Hopes of our being extricated, even tho' we should now go to

War; unless the Nation were **convinced** that it was to be under the Direction of those who have the Good of their Country at Heart, and not of Men who enter into War only with a View to screen themselves, and to stop the universal Clamour which they now begin to fear. A War under the Direction of such Men, would be the most ridiculous, the most destructive Measure that could be pursued. It would answer no End but that of damping the Subjects, and encouraging their Enemies. And very probably the first Effects of the Preparations for such a War would be the Oppression and Ruin of the trading Part of the Nation. For such a Ministry would reason with themselves in this Manner. " These People were " obstinate to have a War with *Spain*, and " they shall have one. But we will be in- " genious enough to find out the Means of " making them soon heartily weary of such " a War." In Consequence of this Way of Reasoning, there is no Doubt but that a weak vindictive Ministry may embarrass the Trade of the Nation, so as that the Merchants may suffer more from them in one Month, than they suffered from the *Spaniards* in twelve. But would such a War answer the Ends of the Nation, would it not rather convince all the World that *Spain* had nothing to fear, since *we* must be absolutely undone before *she* can suffer?

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These might be the Reasons why, in the proceedings upon this Question, no Motion was made for an immediate Address to his Majesty, that he would be pleased to declare War against *Spain*. It was thought more proper to proceed in such a Manner, as to convince the Nation that the War was not undertaken by the Advice of the Ministry but of the Parliament, who would take Care if it was not managed in the Manner that is most agreeable to the Interests of the Nation, that the Delinquents should be called to an Account. Because if it was proclaimed in Consequence of their Advice, they were engaged in Honour that it should be carried on, so as to answer the just Expectations of his Majesty and the People.

On the other Hand the Motion was thought to be extremely improper. Nobody offered to dispute the Matter of Fact, or to deny that *Spain* merited the most severe Vengeance from *Britain*, but many were of Opinion, that it would be very impolitic in *Britain* to make a formal Declaration of War. Such a Step, said they, would put *Spain* upon her Guard, and we might expect soon to hear that the Ships and Effects of all our Merchants in her Ports, or on her Seas are seized by Orders of the Court of *Madrid*. Whereas if we strike the Blow without any formal Declaration of War, we shall take her unprovided

vided to resist, and our Merchants in the mean Time have an Opportunity of withdrawing their Effects. Besides, by our declaring War, we give her a fair Handle for calling in her Allies to her Assistance, and if *France* should interpose on her Behalf, it would be hard to foresee the Consequence.

To this it was replied, that we must suppose the *Spaniards* to be void of common Prudence, if they are not already sufficiently provided against the worst. It can never be expected that they would have violated their Faith with us in the most scandalous Manner, without doing all they could to put themselves in such a State as to defy our Resentment. If one Man without the least Provocation should break another Man's Head with a Cudgel, we can never suppose that the Person so affronted could attack the other unprovided; for the Moment this last gave the Blow, if he is not a Fool or an Idiot, he laid his Account with the worst, and was prepared for all Events.

As for our Merchants, it must have been the Height of Infatuation if they have had any considerable Property in the Dominions of *Spain* these eight or ten Months past, since during that Time that Court has in all her Proceedings discovered the strongest Inclinations to break thro' all the Ties of Faith and Honour. Besides, we must suppose them

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surprisingly ignorant, if they did not know, that the first Thing which the *Spaniards* do in Case of a Rupture with our Court, is to seize the Effects of our Merchants, and that she has often done it, even when there was no declared War betwixt the two Nations.

If we should forbear from declaring War because the *French* may take the Part of *Spain*, that is a Reason that never can be removed; because the *French* will be as ready to take their Part some Months hence as they are now. And if we shall never dare to assert our just Rights lest the *French* should interpose, we are in a very wretched Situation indeed. Besides it might be very much for the Advantage of *Britain*, if the *French* at this Juncture were obliged to pull off the Mask, because we should then know the worst; and be no longer betrayed by a Friendship that was never known to be disinterested, nor misled by Professions that were never found sincere.

The Expediency of attacking the *Spaniards* without any formal Declaration of War was very much questioned without Doors likewise. Every Body seemed to be surprised that such a Step should be taken, at a Time when a Bill was carrying through the House, for enabling his Majesty to pay to *Spain* a Debt that was incurred by following the very Measure now proposed. For the 60,000 *l.*
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that was stipulated by the Commissaries, to be paid to the Court of *Madrid*, was to satisfy a Claim of that Court, and admitted by ours for Sir *George Bing's* attacking their Fleet without any formal Declaration of War. This was, in Effect, a disavowing the Justice of our Proceedings at that Time ; for we never yet heard of any Reason given by *Spain* why she reclaimed the Ships then taken, but because they were taken before any formal Declaration of War ; nor can the least Argument be suggested, why we may not in the present Case be brought to cry *peccavi* in the same Manner, in Case we observe the same Conduct.

It was farther observed, that the present is perhaps the most proper Juncture for declaring War with *Spain*, of any that has offered for many Years. In *Old Spain* the Government is miserably distrest. A barren Year has occasioned a vast Scarcity of Provisions, which has ruined Multitudes of the common People ; and the Galloons not being suffered to return, has laid their Ministry under the Necessity not only of reducing the Interest of their Money, but of retrenching the ordinary and almost necessary Expence of their Government. This is evident, by their disabling their Subjects from enjoying two Salaries at the same Time, and their reducing the highest of these Salaries almost one

Year. An Example worthy to be imitated by some of their Neighbours. Such is the Situation of *Old Spain*, but that of *New Spain* and their Dominions in *America* is still worse.

After their Conquest of these Countries, every Subject of *Spain* was equally qualified by their Laws to be a Governor. This was of great Service to the Subjects, for the Governors were generally Men who had a great natural Interest in the Country, and therefore took Care that their Government should be as mild as possible, so that in a short Time, that People arrived to a surprizing Pitch of Wealth and Power. But this Plan being not at all agreeable to the Genius of the *Spanish* Court, which perhaps grew jealous of the flourishing Condition of their foreign Dominions, they disqualified all from being Governors who were not *Castilians*. These, being generally very poor when they were sent over to their Governments, opprest the People intolerably, which was the true Reason why their Government was reduced to the miserable Situation that we have already described. But since the present Queen of *Spain* got such an Ascendant over the Councils of that Court, their Government in *America* is no better than a Faction. For she opened the Door for her hungry *Italians* to get into all the Posts of Profit or

Trust there, and has thereby weakened the Government so much, that no Change could happen at present, which would not be agreeable to their Subjects. Therefore if we should at present act with Vigour and in good Earnest, there is all the Reason in the World to believe, that we might distress the *Spanish* Court so as to make them agree to any Terms we shall please to impose.

I never could learn that any Answer was offered to these Reasons for our entering into an immediate War with *Spain*; but it was generally believed at that Time, that the Ministry had offered to the Merchants Letters of Reprizal. This Opinion was strengthned by what fell from the Peer who made the Motion; for his Lordship observed, that " as the Insults and " Injuries had been done to the Crown and Peo- " ple of *England*, it would therefore be a Stain " upon both, if Reprizals were made by any less " Power than the Royal Navy." He likewise observed very justly, " that making Reprizals " by Merchants and private Persons was a " Measure always dishonourable to great States " and destructive to small ones." But whatever may be in this Conjecture, it is certain that the Thing was no longer talked of either in public or in private, so that the only Question was with Regard to the Expediency of declaring War; and it was surprising that there should be any Question about that, since e-
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every Man in the Kingdom seemed to agree that a War was necessary and unavoidable.

The next Argument that was advanced for a War was the great Advantage that must arise to *Britain*, in Case our Court should order her Fleet to intercept the Galleons. This Measure was objected to, because only a small Share of the Property of these Galleons belonged to *Spain*, and that we should thereby make the *French*, and perhaps the *Dutch* likewise, our Enemies. But to this it was replied ; that tho' in Reality the *Spaniards* have but a small Share in their own Galleons, yet we were as a Nation, to understand that every Shilling on Board them belonged to *Spaniards*. If any other Nation is engaged in that Trade, they must carry it on in Violation of the express Words of Treaties, which bind up all other People except the *Spaniards*, from having any Trade with their *West Indies*. In Consequence of this, all the Goods on Board their Galleons and Plate-fleet are entered in *Spanish* Names, so that they were taken, no Nation in *Europe* could reclaim them ; and if any Nation were to do it, we ought to let them know that the Language amongst sovereign Powers is different from that amongst Merchants and Traders. If we were publickly and avowedly to declare this to be our Intention, we might very probably soon find the good Effects of such a Resolution. The

French know very well, that all the Sea Force, which both *Spain* and they can muster up at present, would be ineffectual to prevent it, if we are in good Earnest ; and if the Blow were struck, they know that it would in a Manner ruin *Spain*, and could not fail greatly to distress themselves. What must be the Effect of these Considerations ? We are at present in a Condition to laugh at their Threats ; we have no Reason to believe they are, or will ever be our hearty Friends, and we are sure that they are already our underhand Enemies. It is therefore very natural to suppose, that they will not risque the vast Property they have on Board the *Spanish* Galleons, by protecting and siding with that Court in her Claims, and that they will therefore alter their Tone, and give *Spain* to understand that she ought to do us Justice, and that if she won't, they will consider themselves as Parties against her. This may very possibly be the Case ; but if it were not, what Inconveniency can arise to *Britain* from this Measure ? It is impossible that we can be in a worse Situation than we are in at present ; and the sooner we oblige *France* to declare herself openly, it is so much the better for us.

To these Reasons it was answered, that it would be extremely imprudent in us to declare for a Step which would infallibly occasion a Breach betwixt us and *France*. If such a Mea-

a Measure is proper, there is so much the greater Necessity that it should be kept secret, for to publish it to the World might put them on their Guard, so as to take such Precautions as to render it impossible for us to attack their Plate-fleet, or if we did attack it, it may be so guarded as to bid us Defiance. As to the Treasure on Board that Fleet, it was owned it was all in *Spanish* Names; but it is very well known, that other Nations looked upon themselves as the lawful Proprietors of it; and that before now, it had been formally reclaimed from our Court when taken by our Ships. Thus *Britain* may be stript of every Ally she has in the World, and in the End, the Public be obliged to refund the Treasures that have enriched only private Persons.

I don't know, Sir, if you will be of Opinion, that this is a very satisfactory Answer to the Reasons I have already suggested why we ought to pursue this Design; but a great many were of Opinion, that nothing can make either our Neighbours or our own Subjects believe that we are in Earnest about a War, till we enter into some vigorous Measure of that Kind. Had the Parliament thought fit to have interested itself in the Affair, their Opinion had no Doubt been decisive, but as it was entirely left to the Ministry to act what Part they shall think fit, some of your Friends

were afraid that they would act the same Part over again that they had done all along. Be that as it will, a noble Peer who was never known to be influenced either by Hopes or Fears from the Court, declared that he was not for agreeing to a Question that would unavoidably tend to bring on another which must produce an Address for a War; that he was for leaving the Part we are now to act entirely in the Hands of the Ministry, and that if they failed to act the Part which all the Nation loudly demanded they should act, he himself would be the first to move that they should be called to a severe Account.

It is no hard Matter to conceive what such a Part must be. If they act the Part that all the Nation calls out for, they will look upon the Convention as now broken through, they will look on that Breach not only as a fresh Instance of *Spaniſh* Insolence, but as a pulling off their Mask, and an absolute Refusal to consider us longer on the Foot of one independent People treating with another. In short, they will act by the *Spaniſh* Court, as we learn a noble *Roman* did by a shuffling Minister. He described a Circle round him with a Rod he held in his Hand, and gave him to understand that he must determine absolutely to yield, or absolutely to deny, before he went out of that Circle. Had we acted in so resolute a Manner

sixteen Years ago, the Liberty of our Navigation had either been secured, or it had been left in the Power of the *Spaniards* to have interrupted it. Such doubtless is the Conduct which the noble Peer expected our Ministry to observe ; and such a Conduct they must observe, unless they have a Mind to let the World know, that we are no longer to be considered as an independent Nation, acting under a Sovereign who holds his Crown by no other Tenour than the Security of his People's Rights ; That we are no longer to look on ourselves as in Possession of these Rights ; and that we are avowedly the Dupes of *Spain* and the Slaves of *France*. In short, it seems the Majority of the House were of Opinion, that the Ministry would act on this Occasion, a Part becoming the Honour of the Crown and the Independency of the Kingdom ; for upon the previous Question, the Motion was dropt by a more considerable Majority, than it happened upon the Division of the Debate upon the Address.

It was perfectly amazing to us without Doors, to hear that a legislative Body refused to assert one *undoubted* Fact ; a Fact which they themselves owned to be *undoubted* ; and which it was necessary they should find, otherwise it was impossible they could come to any Resolution on that important Affair. But we soon saw the Justice and the Expediency of their

their Conduct. For in a few Days Orders were issued for an additional Levy to our Land-forces ; a hot Press went forwards, and as a convincing Proof that vigorous Measures were to be taken, an Embargo was laid upon all Ships but those in the Service of the Government. This shews that the Ministry are resolved to engross the whole Glory of humbling *Spain* to themselves. But should the Nation be fatally mistaken, should we find that these Armaments, these Oppressions upon Trade, are only designed to amuse one half of the Nation with empty Show, and to terrify the other half from calling for a War, in which the little Finger of the Ministry may be more heavy than the Loins of the *Spaniards* ; I say, should the Nation find this, and at the same Time find an Army of 34,000 mercenary Troops, paid and directed by the Government in her Bowels, what Slaves may we then be ? How fatally may we then experience what has been so often foretold, and is now so little believed ?

On the other Hand, if they who are deaf to the Groans of their bleeding Country, oprest by an insolent Rival, and betrayed by a faithless Ally, have not only their Ears open, but their Swords ready to strike in Favour of an Interest foreign to that of *Britain*, and if our Rights of Trade and Navigation are sacrificed

crified to secure the Possession of *B*—*n* and *V*—*n*, we are still in a worse Situation, since the small Remains of our Wealth would then be exhausted, in protecting Acquisitions that ought to be indifferent to us, and may be fatal to our Posterity. But I am far from entertaining these Suspicions ; I believe the Ministry will not give such an Advantage to those who loudly maintain, that the *Majority of a Parliament may be a Faction against the People.*

One Circumstance which confirms me in this Opinion is, that when his Majesty was pleased to come to the House of Peers in order to prorogue the Parliament, the *S*—*r* of the *H*—*e* of *C*—*s* introduced the Bills that were ready for the Royal Assent, with a Speech that glowed with all the Spirit of a brave People cruelly opprest by foreign Power and domestic Faction, but who were resolved to chastise the one, and to check the other. He observed that *the Spaniards by this last Treatment of his Majesty, had completed the Measure of their Iniquity, and that it was now high Time to give a Loose to the national Vengeance due to the Wrongs suffered by a People, impatient of Injuries, and jealous of their Rights.* Concluding with a Prayer to God, *that he would grant his Majesty Success, equal to the Greatness of the Injuries which the Nation had suffered, and to the Justice of the Cause*

which be maintained. This was entirely agreeable to what fell from the noble P—r, who is the Mouth of the other House, in the Debate upon the previous Question above mentioned. He said (alluding to what had been thrown out by another noble P—r) that the present was *a Time more proper for Meditation and Action* too, than for Discourse. These Sentiments, so worthy of the Noble Personages who delivered them, and the august Assembly in which they were spoken, appeared to be the Result of a thorough enquiry into the Nature of our Differences with Spain, and the Genius of that Court; for it was no hard matter to foresee, that as the Convention was made only to serve a Turn, the Spaniards would never do any thing effectual towards fulfilling it.

The Event justified this Conjecture; for when the Time appointed for the Conferences came, the Spanish Plenipotentiaries not only refused to agree to the Payment of the 95,000 £ till the 68,000 £. demanded by them of the South-Sea Company was paid, but refused, in the interim, to suspend the Exercise of their Claim to search the British Ships. Our Plenipotentiaries; on the other hand, with great Justice insisted, that the Disavowal of that Claim ought to be the Foundation of their future Conferences. This was insolently refused by the Spaniards; upon which Mr. Keene, after presenting a Remonstrance, left that Court. Things

Things coming to this Crisis, Matters could be no longer palliated ; there was not now the least Pretence of protracting Negotiations ; we then had Recourse to that Article of the Treaty of 1670, by which it is stipulated, " that in Case of an absolute Denial of Justice, or an unreasonable Delay in granting it, Letters of Marque and Reprisal might be issued out to the Subjects of the injured Party." Accordingly an Order for granting such Reprisals, not only to our Merchants, but to our Fleet, was made by the Council.

Soon afterwards, a Manifesto of his Catholick Majesty, with that Court's Reasons for not paying the 95,000*l.* was published at *London*. But both these *Pieces* contain Arguments so weak in themselves, and so inconsistent, not only with all the Treaties betwixt us and *Spain*, but with the Law of Nations, that our Court and the *South-Sea Company* thought them beneath their Notice. Some People took notice, that they contained all the Arguments used by our Ministerial Writers vampt up anew. His Catholick Majesty, in one Passage, takes notice of the Obstinacy of those in the Opposition, as one Reason why the Convention remained unfulfilled. But a great many thought, that if the Opposition had such an Effect, it had done the greatest piece of Service possibly could be

done to *Great Britain*, since it had prevented the Stipulations of that ruinous Treaty from taking effect.

In the mean time, the *French* were not idle. The Cardinal, whose Inclinations were always averse to a War, in which *France* must inevitably take part in order to fulfil her Engagements with *Spain*, sent over the Count *de Cambis*, as it is said, to propose a Mediation. It is even reported, that his Commission extended so far, as to offer Payment of the 95,000*l.* But both these Proposals were rejected ; and the *Spanish* Ambassador, despairing any longer to amuse our Court, either voluntarily left it, or was abruptly ordered away. The State into which the granting our Letters of Reprisal put us with *Spain* was such, as gave them great Advantages over us : The *French*, whose good Will to the *Spaniards* cannot be doubted of, imagining, that our not being in a State of declared War with *Spain*, gave them a Right to supply the *Spaniards*, who were very much distressed by our Fleets lying on their Coasts, with whatever they wanted. The private Subjects of *Holland*, who are never wanting to improve every Incident to their own Advantage, were probably very glad to have such an Opportunity of promoting their particular Interests. But both the one and the other soon found, that our Admirals and Captains had received

Instructions

Instructions not to let the Interests of the Nation suffer from any mistaken Delicacy. Accordingly they used no Ceremony in searching the Ships, both of the one and the other, in the same manner as in the time of actual War. This they were justified in, by our being, properly speaking, still in a State of War with *Spain*, since no Publication of Peace was made since the last Declaration of War. But that they might have no Shadow for complaining of hard Usage, the *British* Court issued out a Declaration of War against *Spain*, which was proclaimed in due Form Octob. 23. 1739.

It may not be amiss to close this View with observing, that of late, the Situation of Affairs betwixt *Britain* and her Neighbours seems to be very much altered. The Emperor, after concluding a very disadvantageous Peace with the *Turks*, finds himself now at leisure to look about him, and to take such Measures in Concert with *Great Britain*, as may check the dangerous Consequences of the strict Alliance betwixt *France* and *Spain*. The *Czarina*, in order to secure her Dominions from the *Swedes*, who will probably be supported by *France*, likewise finds it her Interest to give ear to an Accommodation with the *Turks*, that she may unite her Interests more closely with *Britain*. The King of *Prussia* seems likewise more inclinable than heretofore to renew his Alliance with this Court, in order to support his Pretensions

tensions to the Dutchies of *Bergue* and *Juliers*, which otherwise may be thwarted by *France*. To these favourable Appearances it may be added, that *Great Britain* has begun the War with great Success, the *Spaniards* having already lost almost as much, if we may credit the publick News, as is sufficient to satisfy the just Demands of our Merchants.

Thus the Ministry must be left absolutely inexcusable, if the War is not prosecuted with decisive Advantages, even tho' *France* should take part in it with *Spain*.

But, Sir, our Success abroad must depend upon our Unanimity at home; it must depend on a stedfast and uncorrupted Administration; for where there is Corruption, there can be no Unanimity. It depends on the Legislature itself to have this desirable End answered. The Goodness of our Constitution must work itself clear of that Contagion which has hitherto obstructed the Success of all publick Measures, thrown a Damp on the Spirit of the Nation, and subverted the fundamental Principles of Government.

I am, SIR,

Yours, &c.

